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Duxbury Clipper

A Senior Moment for Cass in Duxbury Grand Finale

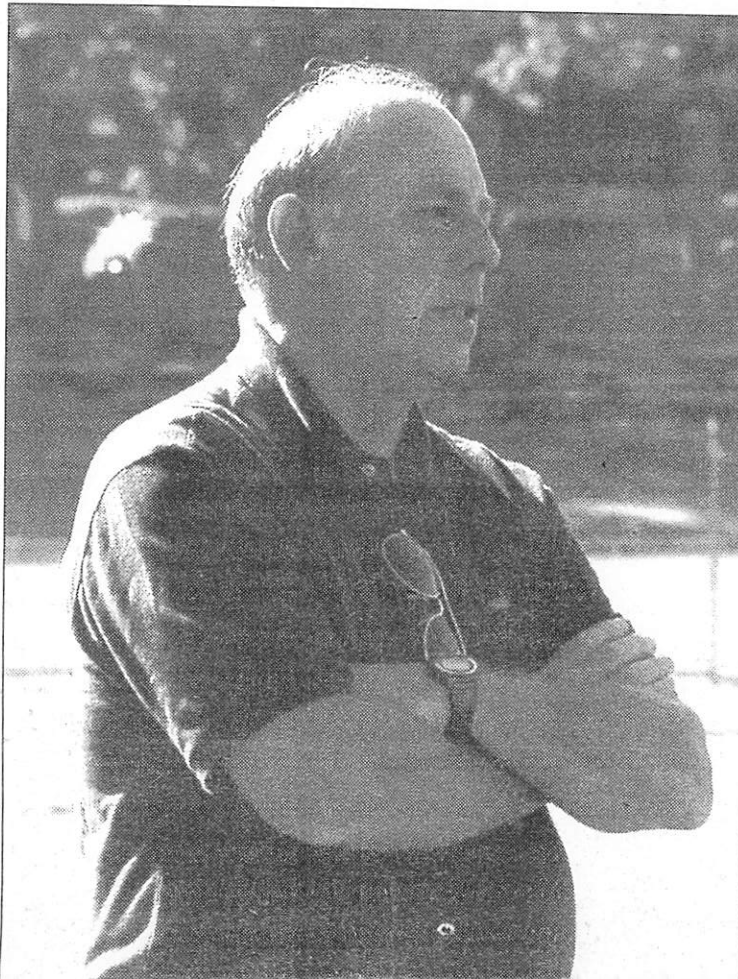
By MIKE HALLORAN

His name has become synonymous with Duxbury soccer, and his coaching accomplishments may never be broken, so it will be an emotional final season for Head Coach Foster Cass as he leads the Dragons in his 34th year of high school coaching.

While it may be his last year of coaching at Duxbury High School, the legendary coach makes no bones about his desire to move on in pursuit of his 600th career win.

"I want people to know that this is Dr. William's decision. I'm not retiring from coaching," said Cass. "I think we have a great team here this year and a shot at winning it all, but I would really like to stay here and win my 600th career game."

(Cass's departure as soccer coach is part of an agreement reach between Cass and the school administration to settle an ongoing dispute over the



has been the biggest surprise in camp with plenty of skills, a hard shot, and a very controlled style of play."

While Klebanoff and Camara control the offensive flow in the midfield, Cass is counting on Arkema to fill the role as the defensive halfback, a job perfectly suited for his work ethic.

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Add the speedy and shifty Conor McGrath to the mix in

back from easily. He needs to get his timing back and that will take him awhile."

While Garbarino and Henninger get acclimated to their new surroundings, there is one defender Cass hardly worries about.

"Brad Reynolds is a very dependable player. He is strong, fast, and tackles well. He just gives you a consistent effort every time out."

With the graduation of Pat Rowe, junior Brook Romano takes over in net after an outstanding JV season in 2001.

"From what I have seen so far in our scrimmages, Brook has far exceeded our expectations," said Cass. "He's very quick and has terrific hands, and he doesn't seem to be afraid to go out of the net and get the ball."

Despite a starting unit that is the envy of competing coaches, Cass is a bit concerned about his

...now sporting a 555-57-58 career mark, Cass has a squad that could very easily add another 20 wins to his resume with 18 seniors on the 23-man roster.

Led by senior tri-captains Ted Sullivan, Kevin Mullins, and Mike Botieri, the Dragons return three of the league's top players that should make defending their league title a lot easier.

Non-league games with Marshfield, Silver Lake, Plymouth North, and Andover will test the team's mettle even more during the regular season, but the coach likes what he has seen so far during the pre-season.

"This is the most senior-laden team I have had in awhile," said Cass, who admitted that depth is a concern. "But we return the league's top two scorers and we have four or five legitimate scorers, so I think you are going to see a very po-



FINAL SEASON: Head Coach Foster Cass is eyeing a successful season in his final year coaching soccer at DHS. Photo by Mike Halloran

tent offense this year."

In Sullivan and Mullins, Duxbury has the perfect blend of speed, toughness, skill, and leadership up front.

"Ted is a very animated player out there and has an eye for the ball," Cass said. "You won't find many tougher kids once he gets inside the box. Kevin is more of the workhorse who is in the middle of everything, always touching the ball and making the plays."

In Duxbury's 4-3-3 offense, senior Mike Hardman will join his classmates up front after a very successful JV season in 2001 that earned him a trip to the varsity late in the year.

"Mike has a very hard shot and can score from way out,"

said Cass. "There is a good chance you'll see him go back and forth from left-wing to left-halfback"

Brett Klebanoff, Dave Camara, and Andrew Arkema will handle the midfield chores, each player utilizing a different style of play that will keep opponents guessing.

"Brett's biggest asset is his speed," said Cass. "He can play on the outside or move inside to center-half. He just causes a lot of havoc out there."

For Camara, just seeing the field is an accomplishment after suffering ankle and leg injuries that caused him to miss the last two seasons.

"I had really never seen him play," admitted Cass. "But he

... Dragons are quite confident that three or four goals per game are not out of the question.

While Cass feels he has the players too form a solid defense, he is a bit concerned that it make take a few games before this group is comfortable in their play.

"I think that the play of our defense will determine how far we go this year," said the coach. "You've got Botieri coming off an injury, and Chase Garbarino learning a new position. Add John Henninger to the mix who is experiencing varsity competition for the first time and it may take a few games for these guys to get used to each other."

The return of Botieri from a knee injury is a big addition for the Dragons, but Cass is being cautious about his return.

"Mike works as hard as anyone out there and is still working himself into shape. That isn't something you come

... talents of senior forward Jon Pierce, senior fullback Scott Klebanoff, junior halfback Brian Cristoforo, senior fullback Kyle Naton, and junior halfback Mark Dineen who should see significant playing time off the bench.

Filling out the roster are senior Parker Chandler, senior Scott Hill, sophomore back Ben Flaherty, senior halfback Matt Files, junior halfback Mark DeLuca, and senior Dustin Willis, who should return in a few weeks after recovering from appendicitis.

"The key to us winning this year will be to put offensive pressure on our opponents," said Cass. "The more we score, the less the pressure will be on our defense."

On Friday night at 7 pm in Duxbury, the Dragons will be put to the test immediately when they tangle with arch-rival Marshfield in their season opener.